Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) Report 1758 - April 22 2011

(Please note that this weeks newscast runs 32 minutes, 32 seconds and contains three breaks)

Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1758 with a release date of Friday, April 22, 2011 to follow in 5-4-3-2-1.

The following is a Q-S-T. The FCC issues its decision on an appeal to keep law enforcement robots out of the 70 centimeter ham band, the one of two Global Simulated Emergency Tests is cancelled, post earthquake ham radio relief operations continue in Japan and ham radio says goodbye to one of the true legends of the hobby. Hear it all on Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) report number 1758 coming your way right now.

(Billboard Cart Here)

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RADIO RULES: FCC ISSUES SPLIT DECISION ON CHALLENGES TO RECON ROBOTICS USING 70 CM HAM BAND

Call this one a draw so far on for ham radio. This as the FCC has given radio amateurs a partial victory and a partial defeat in response to a challenge by members of the Amateur Radio Service and its national society. This, to an FCC waiver permitting ReconRobotics, Inc. to domestically operate its surveillance robot called the Recon Scout in the shared 70 centimeter amateur band. We have more in this report:

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The FCC has denied several requests from the ham radio community, including an ARRL Petition for Reconsideration, of a rules waiver that permits the certification and licensing of the Recon Scout. This, to operate in the 430 to 448 MHz band.

In an Order on Reconsideration released on April 15, the FCC said that it found objections to use of 430 to 448 MHz as being unfounded. This based on the nature of the device, the way in which it must be sold and deployed, and that no other spectrum is as suitable for its operation.

In relation to the latter, the regulatory agency noted that operation of the Recon Scout in the 900 MHz band or high would require increased transmit power while still not guaranteeing the same quality of surveillance as afforded by operation on 70 centimeters. It also noted that the Recon Scout waiver states that these devices may not interfere with federal or non-federal stations operating from 420 to 450 MHz and those agencies using the Recon Scout must accept any interference received from all other spectrum users. In other words, as applied to ham radio operations, its users could not complain to the FCC if it received interference from any Amateur Service operations, but hams could complain if they were interfered with by operation of a Recon Scout.

On the plus side, the FCC did grant a request from the ARRL for changes in the labeling and instruction manual requirements of the Recon Scout. This, to insure that users of the device are aware of its limitations in regard to interference to its operation. As a result, Recon Scout transmitters delivered after April 15th are required to carry a warning on its product label and in its instruction manual basically stating that the Recon Scout must accept any interference received from federal or non-federal stations, including interference that may cause undesired operation.

The FCC Order also acknowledged that the ARRL was correct in arguing that the waiver was insufficient in that it did not waive applicable provisions of Section 2.106 of the Commission's Rules, which contains the Table of Allocations of frequency bands to the various radio services. The Commission's solution was to retroactively waive the Table of Allocations to the extent necessary to permit distribution and use of the Recon Scout.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Bruce Tennant, K6PZW in Los Angeles

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For those not aware, ReconRobotics bills itself as a world leader in tactical robotic systems. It claims that more than 1,200 of the company's robots have been deployed world-wide by the U.S. military and international friendly forces, federal, state and local law enforcement agencies, bomb squads and fire rescue teams. More about the company is on-line at www.reconrobotics.com. (FCC)

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RESCUE RADIO: MAY GLOBAL SET CANCELLED

There will be only one Global Simulated Emergency Test or GlobalSET in 2011. Writing on the IARU Region 1 website, Greg Mossop, G0DUB, the IARU Region 1 Emergency Communications Coordinator says that the only GlobalSET will happen November 12th from 1100 to 1500 local time.

According to Mossop, the cancellation of additional GlobalSET's this year is due to work pressures on the organizer who has limited the time to prepare reports from earlier events and properly set up the needed activities for the now cancelled Simulated Emergency Test which had been slated to take place in May.

The Emergency Communications Coordinators for Regions 2 and 3 have been consulted on the cancellation of the May event. Thus far neither has voiced any objections to the change. (Southgate)

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RESCUE RADIO: POST QUAKE HAM RADIO RELIEF EFFORTS CONTINUE IN JAPAN

Amateur radio relief operations are continuing to help with disaster recovery area struck by the worst earthquake in Japan in 140 years. We have more in this report from Amateur Radio Newsline's Norm Seeley,

KI7UP:

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Ken Yamamoto, JA1CJP, is the International Amateur Radio Union Region 3 Secretary. He reports that there are several stations on 7.030 and 7.043 MHz who are handling medium distance information exchanges, but the majority of ham radio operations appear to be on the VHF and UHF bands.

As previously reported here on Newsline, JA1RL the headquarters station of the Japan Amateur Radio League in Tokyo, became a disaster communication center in the days immediately following the giant killer quake. Yamamoto is quoted as saying that some 250 transceivers holding Japan Amateur Radio League licenses are being used for communications between various refugee camps and local government offices. He says that two sets of 430 MHz repeaters have been delivered to the disaster area. They are operational and being used to augment the existing repeater coverage and provide easier communications between those using the hand-held transceivers.

JA1CJP says that some towns are so heavily disrupted that the local government offices are also serving as refugee centers and the residents are staying in multiple locations. In such cases, amateur radio can contribute quite a lot in maintaining the ties between the local government and displaced residents.

The earthquake, now graded at nine on the Ritcher scale, and followed by a tsunami hit north-eastern Japan on March 11th. It has so far been blamed for over 13000 deaths and the destruction one of Japan's major nuclear power facilities. That plant near Fukushima is still the site of an intense campaign to bring several damaged reactors back under control and stop the leakage of radio active waste water into the ocean.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Norm Seeley, KI7UP, watching the situation from Scottsdale, Arizona.

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It's expected that the ongoing emergency communications being provided by amateur radio will continue for a considerable time to come. A presentation on the Japanese earthquake triple disaster and the role played in relief efforts by radio amateurs will be made at the 2011 Global Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Conference. It's slated for in Sun City, South Africa, in August. (VK3PC)

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INTRUDER WATCH: BRAZILIAN FREEBANDERS HEARD ON 10 METERS

The IARU Region 1 Intruder Watch newsletter reports that Brazilian CB-like or so called Freeband stations using full carrier AM is now often audible between 28.000 and 28.305 MHz. Most of these stations are being heard in the evening hours. The report says that the Brazilian telecommunications regulator Anatal seems to have no interest

in this problem or in keeping these stations from operating in the 10 meter Amateur Service band. (IARUMS -R1)

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INTRUDER WATCH: MOROCCAN FISHING FLEET HEARD ON 15 METERS USB

And Ulrich Bihlmayer, DJ9KR, says that he has not only heard a Moroccan fishery operations on 21 MHz using upper sideband, but that he has also researched the matter and has found out the ship names and other details. The vessels in question are registered in Agadir, Morocco. DJ9KR has already informed the Moroccan Amateur Association of the situation. (IARUMS - R1)

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BREAK 1

>From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline, heard on bulletin stations around the world including the Baton Rouge Amateur Radio Club repeater serving Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

(5 sec pause here)

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RADIO RECORDS: UK LIGHT COMMUNICATIONS DISTANCE RECORD CHALLENGED

The optical distance record claimed in the U-K may not be a record after all. Amateur Radio Newsline's Frank Haas, KB4T, has more:

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Since our light communications record claim story aired on last weeks newscast, we have received numerous e-mails and even a few phone calls that say the accomplishment in the U-K falls far short of other claimed distances set in elsewhere around the globe. In fact, the number of such claims far outweighs the space we have available to report them all.

But as pointed out by one of our listeners, the 90 kilometer distance claimed in the U-K is only about 56 miles and there are a number of well-documented communications over longer distances. This includes one as early as 1962 in southern California. Another listener points out a more recent accomplishment over a 173 mile path.

But as another of our listeners also points out, there is really no official record-keeper of optical distance records. At least not here in the United States. This he says is partly because until very recently, the ARRL did not recognize non-coherent communications for contest purposes. Also, since the FCC does not claim to regulate communications above 400 GHz, some might question whether a QSO that does not require a license is really an amateur radio contact at all.

But the 90 kilometer contact we reported last week took place in the

United Kingdom, and the way that light communications distance records are looked upon over there may be quite different than the way they are viewed on this side of the Atlantic, or the way that they are viewed elsewhere in the world.

For the Amateur Radio Newwsline, Im Frank Haas, KB4T, in Holly Hill Florida.

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The bottom line: If hams are going to lay claim to optical distance records, then what is needed is an organization respected and accepted by all of the worlds ham radio community to corroborate any claims made, and to declare who has set a valid record and who has not. (ARNewsline from listener input)

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RADIO LEGISLATION: CBO ESTIMATES THAT AR ENHANCEMENT ACT WOULD COST ABOUT $1,000,000

The Congressional Budget Office says that implementing the Amateur Radio Emergency Communications Enhancement Act, also known as S. 191, would cost about $1 million over the next five years. This, based on the fact that pay-as-you-go procedures do not apply to this legislation because it would not affect direct spending or revenues.

As written, the proposed legislation would direct the Department of Homeland Security to conduct a study on the uses and capabilities of the Amateur Radio Service during and after a disaster or emergency. The bill also would direct the Inspector General of the Department of Homeland Security to report to the Congress on the cost of grant programs operated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and to what degree those programs provide duplicative or overlapping assistance.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that based on similar past examinations, that the cost of producing both studies would be about $1 million in 2012. This, subject to the availability of appropriated funds. (Congressional release via WA6ILQ)

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D-STAR CORNER: A CHANCE FOR YOUR CLUB TO GET AN ALMOST FREE D-STAR REPEATER

ICOM America Inc. has announced a two week D-Star Deployment promotion that could bring D-Star operation to your local ham radio community.

>From April 25th to May 9th, your radio club can purchase either a 2 meter or 70 centimeter D-Star repeater package direct from Icom America for only $3000 plus shipping costs and any applicable taxes. What you get for your $3000 is a D-Star controller, a 2 meter or 70 centimeter D-Star R-F module and the G2 D-Star Gateway Software package. These are the three essential building blocks needed to bring D-Star to your area. You supply the necessary peripherals such as an antenna, power

supply, a high speed Internet connection and of course a site to hose the new D-Star machine.

But the best is yet to come. If you can meet a number of requirements within 90 days from the date of purchase, Icom will refund the original $3000 purchase price excluding the taxes and shipping costs. These requirements include installing the new D-Star repeater in permanent location that you must identify at the time of purchase. Also, the machine must be fully operational on the U-S ROOT trust server with Icom G2 Gateway Software and within the requirements outlined by the U-S ROOT Administration team; have a minimum of 10 users registered on the repeater and you must guarantee to keep the system on air for minimum of one full year from date of installation.

This program is limited to the first 70 qualifying clubs located in the certain priority areas. Also, your proposed system cannot be located within a 100 aeronautical mile radius an existing D-Star repeater already on the air.

To see if your club qualifies for this rather enticing offer, please send a club bio and an outline of how your new D-Star repeater will be used in your community to DSTAR.Promo@icomamerica.com. (ICOM America release)

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HAMVENTION 2011: W5KUB TO AGAIN NETCAST FROM THE DAYTON HAMVENTION

Tom Medlin, W5KUB, says that he will one again be streaming live audio and video from the Dayton Hamvention. According to Tom, this will be the 9th year that he will be netcasting live on w5kub dot com beginning with his 550 mile ride from his home in Memphis, Tennessee, right to the Hamvention site at the Hara Arena in Dayton.

The W5KUB dot com webcast from Hamvention has become very popular over the years, especially with folks who have never attended Hamvention or have no way to get there. Tom tells Newsline that there are viewers are in over 150 countries and during the 2010 Dayton Hamvention broadcast, he had over 50,000 hams watch and follow us for the entire show.

And during this years netcast, Tom will also be giving away over $5000 in prizes to give lucky viewers. Some of the prize donors include Heil Sound, Kenwood, Yaesu, MFJ, Kantronics, LDG and the ARRL. That alone is something that you won't want to miss.

So if you cannot make it to Hamvetion 2011, you can attend vicariously from May 18th to the 22nd thanks to Tom Medlin, W5KUB, and his crew at W5KUB dot com. (W5KUB)

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HAM HAPPENINGS: 2011 QCWA NATIONAL CONVENTION - SEPT 7 - 9

The QCWA 2011 National Convention this year will be held September 9th to the 11th at the Crowne Plaza Hotel at the Crossing, Warwick, Rhode

Island. A partial list of presentations include QRP Made Easy by Steve Kercel, AA4AK. Al Coderman, W3ZD, will will present a history of his fathers ham radio operation from 1912 to 1985 while Phil Temples, K9HI will detail his volunteer work with the HandiHams Program. More about this gathering is on-line at www.qcwa.org/2011-convention.pdf. (QCWA)

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HAM HAPPENINGS: ATLANTA RADIO CLUB TO TURN 100

And congratulations to the Atlanta Radio Club Announces which is celebrating its 100th Anniversary with a series of events. Among these is a joint special event operation on May 6th, 7th and 8th in conjunction with Coca-Cola's 125th anniversary. The call sign to be used will be K-Zero-K. Then on June 4th, the club will take part in the 82nd Atlanta Hamfest, where it will release its 100th Anniversary archive DVD. June 25th and 26th will see the club operating station W4DOC slash 100 during Field Day.

By way of background. the Atlanta Radio Club is a special service club affiliated with the American Radio Relay League and has operated continuously since 1911. Currently it is comprised of more than 150 licensed amateur radio operators with a mission to serve the community and advance the hobby. As part of these missions it provides more than 10 local repeaters. For more information on the club and the plans for its 100th anniversary celebration, please visit www.atlantaradioclub.org. (Atlanta Radio Club)

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NAMES IN THE NEWS: NASA HONORS JSC FIRST FLIGHT DIRECTOR

NASA's first flight director says he regrets that the shuttle program is coming to an end because he believes it's the finest spacecraft ever built. Christopher C. Kraft said after a recent ceremony honoring him at the Johnson Space Center that he thinks space shuttles could be used for another 30 years and could take us to the moon or even Mars.

The 87 year-old Kraft was NASA's first flight director for human spaceflight and helped create the concept of Mission Control. He also directed the Mercury and Gemini flights and was a part of the team that put men on the moon during the Apollo program. He went on to serve as director of Johnson Space Center from 1972 to 1982.

At the ceremony, the Johnson Space Center unveiled its new name for Mission Control. Its new designation is the Christopher C. Kraft Jr. Mission Control Center. (NASA)

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BREAK 2

This is ham radio news for today's radio amateur. From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline with links to the world from our only official website at www.arnewsline.org and being relayed by the volunteer services of the following radio amateur:

(5 sec pause here)

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HAM RADIO NEAR SPACE: PROJECT BLUE HORIZON ACROSS THE ATLANTIC

Yet another attempt to float a balloon carrying ham radio gear across the Atlantic may be taking place as we go to air. Project Blue Horizon, a multi-year effort to design, construct, and launch an amateur radio carrying balloon was expected to be launched on April 22nd at 03:30 U-T-C.

According to predictions posted at the Project Blure Horizon website, the balloon will leap skyward from near Oswego, New York and then follow the Jetstream out over the Atlantic. During the flight, radio amateurs around the world are being asked to monitor 7.1023 and 10.1466 MHz CW. It will also carry a GPS based APRS tracker outputting the call KC2ZJH on 144.390 MHz FM. The High Frequency downlink exact frequencies may vary up to 10 hertz or so with temperature and accurate recording of frequency will be useful.

Anyone hearing any of these three signals is asked to send reception reports of the balloon's progress by e-mail to PBH15.data(at) gmail (dot) com. More information about the program, including the latest projected flight path, can be found on-line at www.projectbluehorizon.com (KC2TUA, Project Blue Horizon, Southgate)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: ARISSAT-1 GAGARIN COMMEMORATIVE A FAILURE

The planned operation of ARISSat-1 on April 11 and April 12 from inside the International Space Station as part of the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of Yuri Gagarin's flight was not successful. As of airtime, not one terrestrial station on the ground reported hearing transmissions on the ARISSat-1 downlinks of 145.950 MHz for FM analog or 145.920 MHz for digital.

The planned retransmission of the satellite's FM downlink via the Kenwood TM-D700 transceiver used for ARISS regular contacts was also not successful. This, as no reports were received of signals heard on 437.550 MHz.   (ANS)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: FASTRAC SATELLITES RECEIVE OSCAR DESIGNATIONS

The two newly launched University of Texas FASTRAC satellites now have OSCAR designations. According to Bill Tynan, W3XO, who issues the OSCAR titles, FASTRAC 1 is now FASTRAC OSCAR-69 while FASTRAC 2 has the honor of being renamed FASTRAC OSCAR-70. In making the OSCAR designations public, AMSAT-North America says that it is very pleased to welcome F Oh-69 and F Oh-70 into the family of amateur radio satellites. (ANS, W3XO)

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DXCC: TWO OPERATIONS APPROVED FOR CREDIT

ARRL DXCC Manager Bill Moore, NC1L, reports that two operations on Tristan Da Cunha and Gough have been approved for DXCC credit. The two are the 2010 ZD9AH operation and the 2010 through 2011 ZD9T operation.

According to Moore, if you had these operations rejected in a recent application, please send an e-mail to the ARRL DXCC Desk. He also says that due to heavy e-mail volume, you may not receive a reply, however updates will be posted in Logbook of The World accounts as well as online on the daily listings. (ARRL DXCC)

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DX

In DX, word that EI9FBB will be operational April 20th to the 22nd portable 3A from Monaco. Listen out for him mainly in the European afternoons. QSL direct to EI9FBB.

YL2GM will be active as from Azerbijon as 4K3AC between April 25th and May 3rd. Operation will be on all of the High Frequency bands using 100 atts and operating CW, SSB and RTTY. QSL via YL2GM.

The special calls 4X20HC and 4Z20HC have been aired over the past two months to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of the Holyland Contest in Israel. The calls will remain on the air until the end of April. This is a good opportunity for the prefix hunters to get a couple of new ones. QSL only via 4Z4TL.

M0DOL and M0NNH will be active as GB4RW on April 29th to celebrate the Royal Wedding of Prince William and Catherine Middleton. QSL via the information fund under GB4RW on QRZ.com.

Lastly, a group of Brazilian operators are off to the island of Mayotte where they plan to use the call TO2FH through April 25th. Operation is on all bands from 160 through 10 meters using SSB, CW, RTTY and PSK. Plese do not send paper QSL's either direct or via the bureau. The only acceptable way to get your TO2FH QSL will be electronically via dxwatch dot com. Full QSL information in several languages is on the TO2FH page on QRZ.com.

(Above from various DX News Sources)

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BREAK 3

This is ham radio news for today's radio amateur. From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline with links to the world from our only official website at www.arnewsline.org and being relayed by the volunteer services of the following radio amateur:

(5 sec pause here)

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THAT FINAL ITEM: GOODBYE TO WRL FOUNDER LEO MEYESON, W0GFQ

And finally this week we take a look back at the amazing life of a man who devoted most of his century on Earth to electronics and especially amateur radio. Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, is here with the story of Leo I. Meyerson, W0GFQ:

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In my 52 years as a ham, I only met Leo Meyerson, W0GFQ, twice. The first time was in the early 1960's at some radio store meet and greet -most likely in New York. The second time was at the 1997 Dayton Hamvention banquet where W0GFQ was honored with the prestigious Radio Amateur of the Year Award.

Yet in some ways its like he has been a close friend for years. That's because some of the best contacts I ever made on the air was with a Globe Scout 680A transmitter that came from the manufacturing plant of his famed World Radio Labs -better known in ham radio circles simply as W-R-L. But I do have several friends who knew him a lot better. In fact, one of them, Joe Eisenberg, K0NEB, of Lincoln, Nebraska, was lucky enough to have W0GFQ as a family friend and the person brought him into the hobby:

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KONEB: "Leo was a close friend of my parents, and at the age of 7 I was introduced to ham radio when thet took me to his house and he sat me next to him and he made a couple of contacts on HF. Following that, a couple of days later my father took me to his store and factory at World Radio Labs in Council Bluffs which is right across the river from Omaha where I lived. And my dad purchased me a Hallicrafters S-120 general coverage receiver which Leo showed me how to use. And (also) one of those kits that makes several different devices by wiring components to terminals. And that's how I kind of got started building kits.

"After that, every once in a while we would go back over there. My dad would find me more kits to build and we would talk to Leo more. And when I got older Leo got me registered and signed up for the Novice classes which were held in their factory where they built the Globe and later the Galaxy radios.   And that's where I learned my CW.

"And during that time period I got to watch my very first HF radio being built step by step. Each week it would be further down the assembly line. At the very end of the class we bought that radio. It was a Galaxy GT 550."

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According to Joe, Leo Meyerson was more than a radio manufacturer. He was in many ways an ultimate Elmer, especially to those just joining the hobby.

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K0NEB: "Leo was always a very kind individual and very helpful. He always had suggestions and was always glad to show someone how to set their mic gain, how to tune up a radio properly, what to llok for, how to set up an antenna and all sorts of things. He was always willing to help new hams and get them started.

"And he was definitely my personal Elmer. He sat down with me for my very first Novice CW QSO and kind of walked me through the paces so I knew what to do."

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Only a few weeks ago on February 24th, the Quarter Century Wireless Association hosted a 100th birthday celebration for Leo Meyerson at his winter residence near Palm Springs, California. One of those attending was film and TV producer Dave Bell, W6AQ, who shared this personal vignette of his encounter with W0GFQ, at that event:

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W6AQ: "Well I've known of Leo Meyerson ever since I got into ham radio because his beaming face was in all of his ads for World Radio Labs in all of the magazines. And I desperately wanted to get a couple of his AM amplifiers back when I was young, but I couldn't afford them. And I told Leo that several times - and he just smiled."

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Leo Meyerson, W0GFQ, was not only there at the dawning of the electronic communications age. He was quite literally one of the pioneers who made it happen and who also made it available to all of mankind. And in the process he lived to see telecommunications grow from the age of spark gap transmitters and crystal receivers to the modern broadband systems we all enjoy today. It must have been truly exciting for him and he was a blessing to all of us.

Sleep well Leo. Your job is now complete.

I'm Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF

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Leo Meyerson, W0GFQ, was laid to rest on Sunday, April 17th at the Temple Israel Cemetery Chapel in Omaha, Nebraska. The man may be gone, but the legacy he left behind will be a part of our service as long as any of us are left to sit down before a radio with a mic or key. (ARNewsline(tm))

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NEWSCAST CLOSE

With thanks to Alan Labs, AMSAT, the ARRL, the CGC Communicator, CQ

Magazine, the FCC, the Ohio Penn DX Bulletin, Radio Netherlands, Rain, the RSGB, the Southgate News and Australia's WIA News, that's all from the Amateur Radio Newsline(tm). Our e-mail address is Newsline (at) arnewsline (dot)org. More information is available at Amateur Radio Newsline's(tm) only official website located at www.arnewsline.org. You can also write to us or support us at Amateur Radio Newsline(tm), 28197 Robin Avenue, Santa Clarita California, 91350

And a reminder that the nominating period for the year 2011 Amateur Radio Newsline Young Ham of the Year Award is now open. Created by Newsline back in 1986, this award is offered to recognize one young United States or Canadian radio amateur age 18 or younger for his or her contributions to society through Amateur Radio.

As in years past, the 2011 recipient will receive an expense paid trip to the Huntsville Hamfest in Huntsville Alabama courtesy of Vertex-Standard Corporation which produces Yaesu brand amateur radio gear. Vertex-Standard will also present this years winner with a special ham radio related gift. CQ Magazine will again treat the recipient to a week at Spacecamp-Huntsville. We at Amateur Radio Newsline will present the winner with a plaque honoring his or her achievements.

All nominations and materials required by the official rules must be received by ARNewsline before June 30, 2011. A downloadable nominating form is at our website at www.arnewsline.org. A nominating form can also be obtained by sending a request along with a self addressed stamped envelope to the Young Ham of the Year Award in care of Amateur Radio Newsline, Inc. 28197 Robin Avenue, Santa Clarita California 91350.

Again, the cutoff date for this year's Young Ham of the Year Award nominations is June 30th. We ask you to do your part by nominating a young ham who has done something special related to ham radio. The nomination form is at www.arnewsline.org

For now, with Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, at the editors desk, I'm Jim Damron, N8TMW, and I'm Jeff Clark, K8JAC, saying 73 and we thank you for listening.

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